

1 FEB
31 JAN 1973

*first annual
Design Assembly*

Mr. Leonard Garment
Special Consultant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. Garment:

Thank you for your letter of 1 February 1973 to the Director. He and his Deputy, Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters, hope to attend the 2 April 1973 evening session of the first Annual Design Assembly. I will advise you definitely within the next week whether or not they can attend.

[REDACTED] Chairman, Fine Arts Commission
[REDACTED] and 1 (Room 7D26, IDS
[REDACTED] Agency officials to
attend the Assembly on 3 April 1973. [REDACTED] is responsible for
conceptualizing and guiding the artistic and environmental policy as
it relates to the working environment of our personnel. The Fine Arts
Commission is particularly concerned with office design and layout.

As Deputy Director for Support, I am responsible for technical
and administrative support of this Agency. These broad responsibilities
also encompass the areas of architecture and graphics.

Sincerely,

(S) John W. Coffey

John W. Coffey
Deputy Director
for Support

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SA-D [REDACTED] (12 Feb 73)

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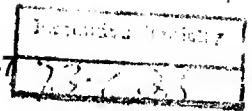
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 1, 1973

Dear Mr. Director:

On May 26, 1971, the President addressed a memorandum to Federal department and agency heads (copy attached) asking them to direct their attention to how their agency can most vigorously assist the arts and artists and how arts and artists can be of help to their agency and to its programs.

On May 16, 1972, a more specific Presidential statement on this matter was read to the Associated Councils of the Arts at their Minneapolis meeting. I also enclose a copy of this statement for your reference.

Pursuant to the third paragraph of that latter statement, the purpose of this letter is to enlist your cooperation in the plans which are now being made for holding the first Annual Design Assembly, as the President requested.

The Assembly will be convened April 2-3 in Washington, D. C. It will have as its theme "The Design Necessity," will focus on the points highlighted in the Presidential memorandum, and will specifically include discussion of (1) the function of design in the Government and (2) the impact of administrative decisions on the quality of graphics and publications, architecture and interior furnishings.

The agenda will include a special evening program for you and your deputy, followed on the next day by sessions on architecture, graphics, interiors and landscaping -- with presentations by outstanding professionals from throughout the country.

The success of this first Federal Design Assembly largely depends on your participation and that of the senior officials in your agency with supervisory and decision-making responsibilities for the selection of architects, design of graphics and other visual aids for publications, and the choice of interior furnishings.

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Director, CIA

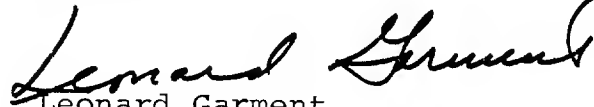
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February 1, 1973

I would appreciate it if you could send me by February 16, 1973, the names, titles, room and telephone numbers of these officials with a description of the areas in which each has administrative authority.]

Enclosed is a recent article by Wolf Von Eckardt, architecture critic for the Washington Post, which illustrates the importance widely attributed to this particular Federal program.

Sincerely,



Leonard Garment
Special Consultant
to the President

attachments

Director
Central Intelligence
Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 26, 1971

MEMORANDUM TO THE HEADS OF
DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Americans in all walks of life are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the arts as a key factor in the quality of the Nation's life, and of their individual lives -- whether in terms of the availability of great cultural resources, the accessibility of exhibits and performances, or simply the aesthetic enjoyment of good design.

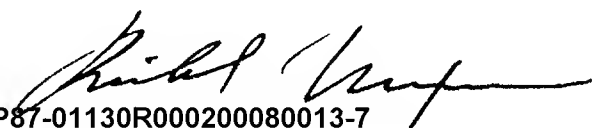
As you know, direct Federal assistance to the arts is being sharply increased, and I have asked the Congress for full funding of the budget authorizations for the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities for fiscal 1972 -- which would roughly double their present funding levels, and raise them to more than three times what they were just two years ago. But the Endowment programs are by no means the only Federal programs that affect, employ or contribute to the arts. In architecture, graphics, school programs, and many other activities, Federal agencies are daily involved deeply with the arts in one form or another.

It is my urgent desire that the growing partnership between Government and the arts continue to be developed to the benefit of both, and more particularly to the benefit of the people of America.

To contribute to this development, I ask each of you to direct your attention to two questions: first, how, as a part of its various programs, your agency can most vigorously assist the arts and artists; second, and perhaps more important, how the arts and artists can be of help to your agency and to its programs.

By focusing consciously, creatively and in a concerted way on these two questions, I believe that we all can find that the arts have a great deal more to contribute to what we in government are seeking to accomplish -- and that this will be good for the arts and good for the country.

I am asking Nancy Hanks, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, to coordinate responses on this, and I would appreciate your letting her know by September 20, what ideas and suggestions you may have, and also what new actions your agency may already be taking toward this same objective.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 16, 1972

One year ago I asked the heads of 63 Federal agencies to determine ways by which their agencies could more vigorously assist the arts and, in turn, how the arts might be used to enhance their programs. The response to that request has been gratifying, calling fresh attention to the importance of the arts in the daily operations of Government and leading to the development of several recommendations by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Today, based upon this first set of recommendations by the Endowment, I am pleased to announce that we shall move forward on three fronts:

-- First, I am asking the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities to sponsor an annual Design Assembly for Federal administrators and artists.

-- Second, I am asking the National Endowment for the Arts to appoint a special ad hoc task force committee to review and expand the publication, Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture; this document was first printed in 1962 and set forth broad aesthetic recommendations of considerable value. I am also asking the National Endowment to recommend a program for including art works in new Federal buildings.

-- Third, I am taking a series of actions to improve Federal graphics and publications. The National Endowment will now be responsible for coordinating the efforts of the executive agencies to upgrade their graphics. I am also requesting Federal agency heads to make a comprehensive review of their own graphics and production, and I am asking the Civil Service Commission to review existing procedures for employing artists, architects and designers for Federal service. The Commission is also to evaluate the need for expert rating panels to review credentials and portfolios of applicants for such jobs, as is done in other professional areas.

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The people of this country are increasingly concerned -- and properly so -- with the physical appearance of their communities. There should be no doubt that the Federal Government has an appropriate and critical role to play in encouraging better design, and I am hopeful that the actions announced today will enable the Government to reflect new standards of excellence in all of its design endeavors.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard Nixon". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered below the main body of text.

STYLE

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1972

Design for Government

By Wolf Von Eckardt

President Nixon yesterday added a new dimension to government sponsorship of the arts.

He called on federal agencies to improve the quality of government architecture and design in order to meet people's increasing concern for the physical appearance of their communities.

In a "Message on Design" to the annual conference of the Associated Council of the Arts, meeting in Minneapolis, Minn., through Friday, the President an-

nounced that he has put the National Endowment for the Arts in charge of coordinating the new federal design improvement program.

Specifically, the President asked the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities:

- To sponsor an annual Design Assembly for government administrators and artists;
- To work out guidelines for the selection of architects, landscape architects and artists and the design of federal buildings and other public works based on the "Guiding Principles for Fed-

eral Architecture" issued by the late President Kennedy and since largely ignored;

- To coordinate efforts to improve the appearance and efficiency of government graphics, such as posters, signs and publications of all kinds.

Nancy Hanks, chairman of the Arts Council, who read the message to the meeting, explained that it reflects President Nixon's understanding that better design of government buildings and graphics "could make a marked improvement in our surroundings and in our ability to communicate."

"Our total environment is made up of lots of little pieces," Miss Hanks said, and the federal government, with its buildings, highways and other public works, as well as its signs, postage stamps, parks and other things, controls a great many of them.

And just as the federal government can take action through its agencies and its Arts Council, Miss Hanks continued, "so, too, can the local and state governments take action through their own agencies and their state and community councils . . . to overcome environmental disarray."

President Nixon's Message on Design is the first breakthrough in a long struggle against mediocrity and apathy in the design of government architecture and visual communication.

The struggle began a decade ago when President Kennedy asked his arts adviser, August Hecksher, how the government might assist the arts and improve the artistic quality of our environment. Some of Hecksher's recommendations eventually resulted in the passage of the National En-

A Design From the President for

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dowment for the Arts and the National Council on the Arts.

But Heckscher's recommendation that the government itself involve outstanding artists and designers and that it improve the artistic quality of its own output, met with sullen silence. The Government Services Administration, which is in charge of the design, construction and furnishing of government buildings, proved particularly adamant in brightening the mediocrity of its red tape.

GSA also made only a few, token concessions when President Kennedy issued and President Johnson reaf-

firmed "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," which had been drafted by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who subsequently became an adviser to President Nixon.

These principles, as Miss Hanks read them to the Minneapolis arts conference, say:

"Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of designs which embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought.

"Where appropriate, fine art should be incorporated in the designs, with emphasis on the work of living American artists.

"Design must flow from the architectural profession

to the government, and not vice versa.

"The advice of distinguished architects ought to, as a rule, be sought prior to the award of important design contracts.

"Special attention should be paid to the general ensemble of streets and public places of which federal buildings will form a part."

To this Miss Hanks added the cause of historic preservation—"renovation to bring new life to our older buildings." The Old Post Office on Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue might be one example.

The task of the special task force is to spell out these noble principles in specifics.

Government and the Arts

The importance of its work is indicated by the fact that more than 20 federal agencies, through direct funding, grants, or loans have influence on the construction of facilities for which in this fiscal year almost \$5.9 billion will be spent.

The Art Council's own efforts are to improve the looks of what Miss Hanks called our "paper bureaucracy," the tons of printed matter that in the eye of the public reflect the government's "image."

This is not just a matter of beauty, however. Industry is beginning to recognize that good graphic design aids communication—the clarity and speed by which

the message is transmitted.

The first Design Assembly, Miss Hanks said, will take place in 1973. Its agenda is to be worked out by a task force headed by Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art and chairman of Washington's Fine Arts Commission.

It will not be just another meeting. Miss Hanks promised, but will establish practical methods to assure that the arts serve the nation in the way the federal government presents itself in public.

The idea, Miss Hanks said, is very simply "to have the arts involved in government, not just supported by government."